

TIMES AND TRAILS

People, Projects and Priorities at Environment and Conservation

Volume 3, No.1

January 2006

In Vision

Environment and Conservation employees:

Over the past few weeks I have spent time meeting with department staff across West Tennessee. My schedule has taken me to Humboldt for a West Tennessee River Basin Authority (WTRBA) board meeting with WTRBA Executive Director David Salyers and members of his board. The WTRBA is a special state agency administratively attached to our department that does its job quietly but effectively. Director Salyers and his staff play an important role by working with local officials and area residents to address flooding and restoration issues for critical West Tennessee water resources like the Forked Deer and Obion Rivers. I also made my fourth trip to Reelfoot Lake State Park to visit with park manager Jimmy Cox as his team was preparing for the Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival. Those wintering bald eagles at Reelfoot might have been a bit confused as the weather was an unseasonable 60 degrees on the day that I was there. From Reelfoot we drove down to Fort Pillow State Park in Lauderdale County overlooking the Mississippi River and met briefly with the newly appointed park manager, Robby Tidwell. I am always impressed with the sheer magnitude of the Mississippi and the untapped potential this mighty river corridor holds for natural, cultural and heritage activities.



Commissioner Jim Fyke

My most recent activities took me to the Memphis Botanical Gardens to serve as the keynote speaker for the Memphis Garden Club, one of the oldest and most influential conservation organizations in our state. This group sponsors a number of programs that support native plant activities in the region and helps Shelby County remain the most botanically diverse county in West Tennessee. The Memphis Garden Club is closely tied to our department as they were instrumental in the founding of the 12,000-acre Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park outside of Millington in the late 1930s.

My remarks were a special opportunity to provide an update on the comprehensive conservation initiative our department continues to advance for the Administration. I was also able to report on the status of the detailed agreement where the Memphis Garden Club was gifting ownership of their Riverwoods natural area to the State of Tennessee. I was particularly pleased to note that years of sometime contentious discussions between numerous parties had now culminated in a comprehensive agreement that met community needs and conserved nearly 350 additional acres. Moving forward our department's Division of Natural Heritage will cooperatively manage this state natural area in conjunction with the City of Germantown. Riverwoods will soon be a state-owned natural area open for the enjoyment of the public.

These trips to West Tennessee have also allowed me to work with and hear from key nonprofit groups like the Wolf River Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy. These organizations are partners with our department and other agencies on a number of activities that will protect and enhance the region's tributaries to both the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers.

This is an exciting – and important – time to be working on conservation issues all across Tennessee. I appreciate the positive impact our employees are making from Memphis to Mountain City.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim".

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www.tdec.net

TDEC to Empower Communities Through Environmental Justice Activities

From presidential executive orders to Hollywood films, our society has demonstrated concern about the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people with respect to their environmental conditions and the environmental laws that affect them.

One response to these concerns has involved a call for environmental justice: the active promotion of nondiscrimination in programs substantially affecting human health and the environment. While environmental justice is concerned about the condition of land, air and water in our neighborhoods, it also stresses that minority and low-income communities have meaningful access to public information and an opportunity for public participation in matters relating to human health or the environment.

Environmental justice activities are not new to Environment and Conservation. The department received a federal grant in 1998 and produced a comprehensive Environmental Justice Strategic Plan in 2000. This plan drew upon more than 2,000 citizen surveys, 400 industrial facility surveys and six community focus groups. While comprehensive and ambitious, this Environmental Justice Strategic Plan requires continued attention and implementation to fulfill its goals.

"I see a connection between environmental justice and the Bureau of Environment's core purpose," noted Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan. "The Bureau's mission is to safeguard human health and the environment for all Tennesseans. Our key values include serving the public in a timely, fair and consistent manner while respecting diverse opinions and providing opportunities for input."

Department leadership has made a commitment to effective implementation of this Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. Following an open invitation to all Bureau of Environment employees, a group was chartered for moving the department forward in fulfilling the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. The first meeting of the Environmental Justice Advisory Work Group was held on January 9. The Work Group decided it will focus on developing a set of action items based on these goals from the Strategic Plan:

- 1. Integrating environmental justice as a core value in the department's policies, procedures, operations and programs.**
- 2. Ensuring fair and equitable application of laws, regulations and policies.**
- 3. Empowering residents and communities to have a meaningful voice in the development and implementation of environmental laws, rules, regulations and policies.**

The Work Group has already begun helping develop a job description for the department's Environmental Justice Coordinator. The person selected for this position will be responsible for leading the department's short-term and long-term environmental justice activities. Lori Munkeboe, Office of Environmental Assistance director, expects this job description to be finalized and posted within the next six months.



TDEC's Environmental Justice Advisory Work Group includes left to right: Paul Sloan, Randall Mann, Vaughn Cassidy, Elaine Boyd, Mike Singleton, Lori Munkeboe, Emeline Johnston, Isabelle Ford, Nicole King, Ann Epperson, Rachel Jakubovitz, James Robinson, Doug Wright, Mike Lee, Jocelyn Bates, Ed Cox, Jackie Manuel.

Highlights from the Office of General Counsel

Regulatory Violation Provides Funds for Red Clay State Park

A Bradley County manufacturing facility was cited for record keeping violations by an inspector from the department's Air Pollution Control division. This violation did not have any negative impact on the environment, the mistake was corrected immediately and the facility did not have any prior violations. Taking these factors into consideration, Rachel Jakubovitz, attorney in the Office of General Counsel (OGC), negotiated a Supplemental Environmental Project or SEP as a way to address the penalty resulting from this violation.



Red Clay Park Manager Lois Osborne and Conservation Worker Jim Schuman stand in front of a tractor now operating on B20 as a result of a recent Supplemental Environmental Project.

The SEP resulted in a \$2,000 payment to the state to be used by Red Clay State Park for storage and use of alternative fuels at the park. Red Clay was selected to be part of this SEP because it is located in the same county where the violation took place, and park leadership was interested in using alternative fuels for park vehicles. Red Clay is using the SEP fund to purchase, store and use a B20 blend of biodiesel, (B20 is a mix of 80 percent petrodiesel and 20 percent biodiesel). Biodiesel is a non-toxic, biodegradable, renewable fuel produced from organic feedstock such as soybeans and used cooking oil. Biodiesel can be blended with conventional fuel and used in many existing vehicles with little or no modification. All diesel vehicles at Red Clay, such as trucks, tractors and mowers, can operate on the B20 with no additional conversion costs.

EPA studies have shown that biodiesel blends like B20 benefit air quality by reducing a range of harmful emissions from diesel engines. Besides benefiting public health and the environment, these domestic, renewable fuels can be produced here in Tennessee – potentially making a soybean field in Gibson County as important to our energy security as an oil field in Saudi Arabia.

Department Attorneys Protect the Environment and Our Communities

Companies responsible for handling different types of waste products in Tennessee are required to provide assurance that financial resources are available for proper operation of their regulated facilities – both while it is open and after it has closed. Landfills require lengthy monitoring when they close to protect nearby communities. Owners/operators must show proof of their financial ability to perform this monitoring over a long-term period after closure. Attorneys in the department's Office of General Counsel often must create and enforce compliance agreements that govern activities in

extraordinary post-closure situations for regulated sites.

When one Tennessee landfill operator went out of business and attempted to walk away from its long-term landfill monitoring responsibilities through bankruptcy protection, the department's OGC took action to unwind a complex legal matter. Max Fleischer, an OGC attorney, persistently pursued recovery of these monies and now has collected approximately \$950,000 that is earmarked to monitor this closed landfill for 30 years. Since the landfill operator is gone, TDEC now has the funds to ensure long-term monitoring is performed.

The Office of General Counsel currently has 15 attorneys, two support staff, four legal assistants and an office manager. Everyone from our commissioner to our inspectors and park rangers need interpretations of the complex, specialized laws and regulations that the Department of Environment and Conservation administers. OGC serves the department by handling litigation matters, reviewing and writing legislation, supporting rulemaking activities, advising on complex permitting matters, and assisting with enforcement, contracting, risk management and fee collection. OGC offices are located on the 20th floor of the L&C Tower. Joe Sanders leads OGC as General Counsel.

Bureau of Environment Sharpens Focus with Statement of Purpose Q&A with Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan

The beginning of a new year also brought the release of a Statement of Purpose for the department's Bureau of Environment (BOE). Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan distributed this one page document setting forth the Governor's areas of environmental emphasis plus the Bureau's Mission, Vision and Values to all BOE employees in January. Paul recently took a moment to talk with Times and Trails about the Statement of Purpose and the impact he expects it to have in the Bureau of Environment.

TnT: *Why should the Bureau have a Statement of Purpose?*

Paul: All great organizations have a clear understanding of their own mission, vision and values. Releasing our Statement of Purpose reminds the public and ourselves who we are, what we do and the values we hold.

TnT: *Where did this document come from?*

Paul: When I joined the Department, I found there had been a number of retreats and surveys where staff members put a lot of effort into articulating what they believed was important. However, I did not see where that great input ever found its way into a concise Statement of Purpose. This document includes the shared aspirations and values I have heard from employees across the Bureau. I am confident the staff that helped shape this Statement got to the core of what is most essential for the Bureau.

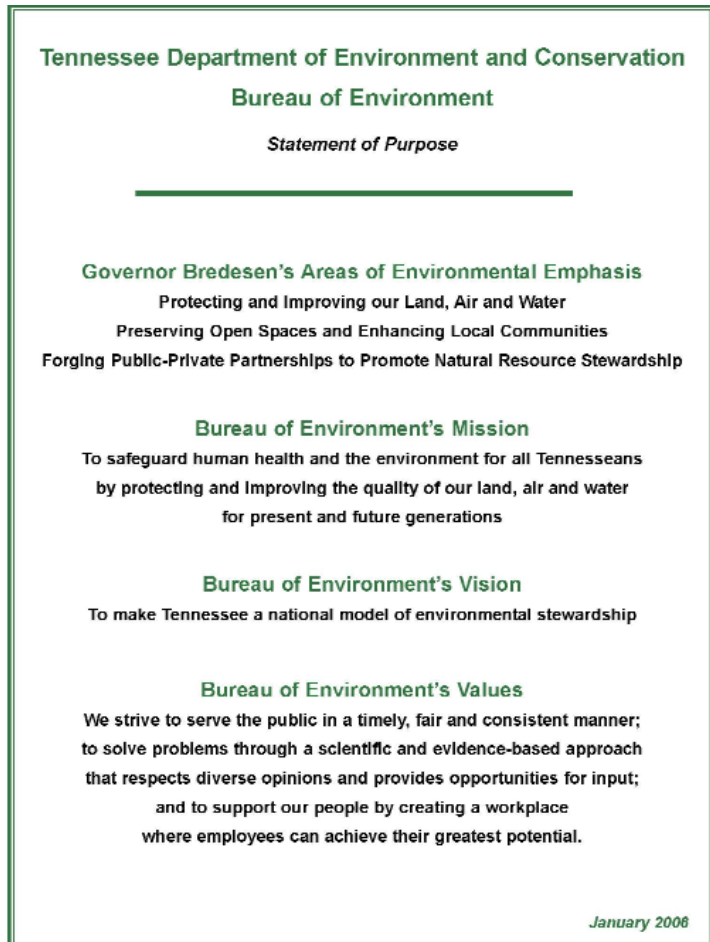
TnT: *What should this Statement mean to employees working in the Bureau?*

Paul: Hopefully this Statement of Purpose will give employees three things: First, it frames for each of us what we do in the context of the Governor's three areas of environmental emphasis. Second, it provides a foundation that we all share together as a family of individuals and friends whose work is dedicated to safeguarding and improving the human health and the environment for all Tennesseans. Third, it gives us all a values standard by which to plan our goals as well as to judge our successes.

TnT: *What does this Statement mean to you? How will it effect what you do?*

Paul: It means for me exactly what I hope it means to everybody else. We have a very worthy and powerful mission. I truly believe that if we strive to fulfill that mission through the consistent application of our values, Tennessee will be a national model of environmental stewardship in all areas.

The Statement of Purpose may be viewed at www.tdec.net/purpose.



Tennessee's Rare Plant Protection and Conservation Act Celebrates 20 Years with Special Poster

It has been 20 years since the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Rare Plant Protection and Conservation Act (RPPCA) to identify, protect and conserve Tennessee's rare plants. Since that time the Department of Environment and Conservation's Division of Natural Heritage (DNH) has been working to inventory, maintain and enhance the numbers of rare plants in the state with a wide range of public and private partners.

Tennessee's rare plant list serves as the focal point for rare plant conservation in the state. There are currently 536 plants on our state rare plant list and nine of these species are found nowhere else in the world. The development of the state rare plant list is guided by recommendations from the Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Committee. This committee reviews and amends the list every three years and changes come following formal rulemaking, public comment and approval by Commissioners at the Departments of Environment and Conservation and Agriculture.

Natural Heritage also lists rare plants that are endangered, threatened or of special concern within the state, as Environment and Conservation is the lead state agency in conducting conservation programs for Endangered and Threatened plant species under the federal Endangered Species Act. Working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Heritage has identified 21 federally listed plant species (13 endangered and eight threatened) and three candidates for federal listing. So far in Tennessee we have had one species, *Scutellaria montana*, down-listed from endangered to threatened; and one species, *Helianthus eggertii*, proposed for removal from federal listing. While these changes reflect shared success in the recovery of these species, significant challenges still remain to achieve recovery for other species of our federally listed plants.

"Most rare plant populations are found on private property within the state," said David Lincicome, Rare Species Protection Program Administrator, "Our progress with inventory and protection of rare plants is a result of partnerships. Tennessee has a good law to protect and conserve rare plants, and we need to continue nurturing the partnerships that enable us to identify, maintain and enhance our state's rare plant species."

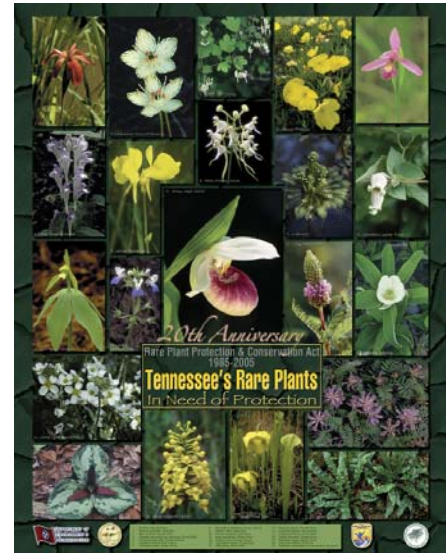
To recognize the 20th anniversary of the RPPCA and the horticultural uniqueness of Tennessee, the Division of Natural Heritage created a special edition poster of "Tennessee's Rare Plants." To reserve a copy of this special edition poster, please contact David Lincicome at (615) 532-0431. For more information about the department's Rare Species Protection Program, visit www.tdec.net/nh/rppp.php.

Q&A with David Lincicome, Division of Natural Heritage Rare Plant Program

Q: *What are some Rare Plant Program successes from the last 20 years?*

The Tennessee coneflower was the first Tennessee plant listed on the list of endangered species in 1979. Since then, the partnership between DNH and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been able to protect and restore its five known populations. The species is found only in Davidson, Rutherford and Wilson Counties. The species' status is currently being considered for removal from the list of threatened and endangered species entirely.

The discovery of three new populations and designation of critical habitat for the endangered Braun's rock-cress in 2004 was a success. This species was previously known only from three populations in Rutherford County



Tennessee coneflower.

Times and Trails

until a DNH survey was completed in 2004. One new population was discovered in Wilson County, extending the species' local distribution. This species is the first plant to have critical habitat designated in Tennessee.

The recent removal of Eggert's sunflower from the Endangered Species Act list of threatened and endangered species was positive. This sunflower is the first plant species in Tennessee to be officially removed from the list of threatened and endangered species. At the time of listing there were only 43 known populations. Today there are 68 known populations, many discovered during recent DNH surveys. Cooperative management agreements now protect 27 viable populations on conservation lands. The largest known populations occur near Tullahoma.

Q: *What should every Tennessean should know about the Rare Plant Protection program?*

The Rare Plant Protect program works hard to effectively identify, assess, protect and restore the state's flora for the past, present and future benefit of all Tennesseans. Our work includes significant research and reference materials that document the statewide distribution of the state's vascular plants. The program is also successful in securing federal monies to protect our state's species – we have acquired nearly \$1.1 million in funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the past 20 years to support research and recovery projects for Tennessee's rarest plants. In addition, the program has acquired nearly \$1.6 million in funding to purchase significant tracts of land that support populations of rare plants such as the Tennessee coneflower and leafy prairie-clover. Most of these projects have only required a 25 percent match in state funding.



Eggert's sunflower can be found blooming in July and August in barrens. This habitat is uncommon in Tennessee and is related to the Midwest prairie. The flowers are approximately three and a half inches across.

New Tool Available to Learn About the Civil War in Tennessee

The Tennessee Historical Commission has announced a new tool for historians, students or anyone interested in the Civil War: The Tennessee Civil War Sourcebook. The sourcebook chronicles the military, economic, social and political history associated with the Civil War in Tennessee. Information in the sourcebook comes from diaries, period newspapers, official Civil War records, ship deck logs, letters, and historical articles. The sourcebook compiles more than 7,000 entries into an easy-to-access documentary collection and provides narration.



*Tennessee State Capitol, Nashville.
Photo: Library of Congress*

Work on the Tennessee Civil War Sourcebook began in 1995, when Tennessee Historical Commission Public Historian James B. Jones, Jr. noticed discrepancies in different publications regarding the number of battles that took place in Tennessee during the Civil War and the authors' failure to provide documentation as to the numbers presented. Since that time, Jones has conducted a historical audit to collect and more thoroughly document information about combat and other aspects of the Civil War in Tennessee from a variety of sources.

The sourcebook makes information available that would ordinarily be difficult for many people to access. In addition to the Web site, a limited number of CDs containing a chronologically arranged version of the sourcebook were created and sent to every public and private secondary school library in Tennessee, as well as public and collegiate libraries. The CDs and Web site were funded by a grant from the National Park Service American Battlefields Protection Program. The Tennessee Historical Commission and Tennessee Wars Commission provided matching funds.

To access the Tennessee Civil War Sourcebook, log on to www.tennessee.civilwarsourcebook.com. For more information about the Tennessee Historical Commission, visit www.tdec.net/hist.

Louis Bordenave Wins Golden Garbage Can Award



Left to right: Mary Anderson, administrative services manager, Bi-County Solid Waste, Louis Bordenave, manager, Problem Waste Section, Solid Waste Management, Pete Reed, director Bi-County Solid Waste/president of the Tennessee Chapter Solid Waste Association of North America.

The Tennessee Volunteer Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA), awarded the 2005 Professional Achievement Award, affectionately known as the “Golden Garbage Can” Award to Louis Bordenave in October.

The “Golden Garbage Can” Award is presented to the person who “demonstrates he or she has provided valuable services and distinguished contributions to the solid waste management industry and the general public beyond the bounds of normal duties and responsibilities,” according to SWANA. The SWANA Awards Committee receives nominations from chapter members and makes the award decision based on these nominations. The award is presented each October at the SWANA conference.

Eleanor Sprowl, executive director, SWANA Tennessee Chapter, stated; “Louis received the ‘Golden Garbage Can’ Award for his service to the chapter during 2005. Since joining the SWANA’s Tennessee Chapter, Louis has continued to keep members abreast of rulings, meetings, hearings and other state events that impact the solid waste industry. “

SWANA recognized that Louis’ assistance is an invaluable tool for them as they serve their cities, counties, and clients in the private sector. “He is always happy to oblige whenever I have a question and if he doesn’t know the answer, he is always willing to find out and get an answer for me,” said Eleanor. “We feel very fortunate to have Louis as a member of our chapter and were very pleased when he was chosen to receive this most deserved award.”

Louis joined the Solid Waste Assistance program in 2000 where he has managed the Planning, Reporting and Waste Reduction Section coordinating the reporting of waste reduction and diversion by Tennessee’s solid

January Service Anniversaries

5 years

Norman Armonat, Jr., Fiscal Services
Matthew Blakney, Long Hunter State Park
Bobby Byrd, Paris Landing State Park
Daniel Dorman, UST, Chattanooga EFO
Timothy Dudley, Pickwick Landing State Park
Patrick Gagan, Roan Mountain State Park
Joan Keatts, Paris Landing State Park
Maylynne Pynkala, Memphis EFO

10 years

Roger Hendrick, Jr., Montgomery Bell State Park
Ross Pahnke, Long Hunter State Park

15 Years

Allen Charboneau, GWP, Columbia EFO
Kimberly Jones, Information Systems
George Kesterson, OEA
Brian Mayo, GWP, Nashville EFO
Julius Nwaokolo, GWP, Nashville EFO
Daniel Roop, SWM, Nashville EFO

20 years

Jamie Burroughs, SWM
Richard Hogshead, SRF – Loan Program
Barbara Loudermilk, WPC, Nashville EFO
Thomas Moss, DWS
Wade Murphy, WPC
Bobby Raines, TN State Parks, Facilities Management
Pamela Stephens, APC
David Turner, WPC, Knoxville EFO

25 years

Mark Hassell, Montgomery Bell State Park
Kenneth Morrison, Big Ridge State Park
Charles Smith, Norris Dam State Park

30 Years

Patricia Skinner, Henry Horton State Park

35 Years

Luther Bobbitt, Natchez Trace State Park
Ronald Burgess, Big Ridge State Park
Evelyn Duke, Information Systems
Christine Vaughn, WPC

waste regions. Beginning in 2006, he is managing the Problem Waste programs which include household hazardous waste collection, waste tires and used oil.

Out and About with the Commissioners

Commissioners Tour Eastman Facilities in Kingsport

Commissioner Fyke and Deputy Commissioner Sloan visited Eastman Corporation on December 20. Eastman is a global chemical company headquartered in Kingsport with manufacturing operations that occupy approximately 800 acres and employs approximately 7500 people.

Eastman is the world's largest supplier of PET plastics for packaging; a leading supplier of coatings for raw materials, specialty chemicals and plastics and a major supplier of cellulose acetate fibers and basic chemicals. Eastman supplies plastics products for credit and debit cards, medical devices, vending machines, signs, display cases, carpet fiber, binder fiber for car interiors and upholstery, heavy-duty shipping sacks and pond liners, toothbrushes and tool handles; sports equipment and photographic, movie and X-ray film.

Eastman has many permits from TDEC for water discharges, air emissions, and solid and hazardous waste management. The first area visited at the plant was the three-onsite hazardous waste incinerators. Eastman incinerates approximately 80 million-pounds of waste annually. Over several years EPA proposed and finalized the hazardous waste combustor Maximum Achievable Control Technology (HWC MACT) rule that applied to these incinerators in addition to the RCRA permits held by the facility. Eastman spent over 55 million dollars in the last few years to upgrade the air pollution control and computer equipment on the three incinerators. Eastman was one of the first in the nation to request and receive approval to conduct MACT upgrades using the new permit modification process. Working with TDEC, EPA, internal consultants and Eastman's Citizen Advisory Panel, Eastman was able to comply on all operating units under the new MACT rule.s

The second area visited was the coal gasification facility. Eastman was the first to operate a commercial coal gasification facility in the U.S. and the first to produce acetyl chemicals from coal. The Kingsport plant started production in 1983 and uses several different technologies, including an Eastman-developed chemical synthesis technology. This facility and process is designated an American Chemical Society National Historic Chemical Landmark and has been designated as the world's best performing coal gasification facility, maintaining a nearly 100 percent reliability rate over the past 20 years.

"I appreciate the opportunity to get a first-hand look at the massive scope and scale of Eastman's manufacturing operations at their Kingsport facility," said Commissioner Fyke. "The organization has demonstrated a commitment to both innovation and lessening their overall environmental impact. I hope Eastman continues to work with its local community and government agency partners to prevent pollution and reduce emissions."



Left to right is Rick Whitson, Janet Evans (Eastman), Fred Willingham, Commissioner Fyke, Mark Brasswell, Philisa Bennett, Johnny King (Eastman), Judy Jarrett.

Commissioner Fyke Visits West Tennessee River Basin Authority Staff in West Tennessee

Commissioner Fyke joined West Tennessee River Basin Authority staff for a photo at the most recent Board meeting in Humboldt. Executive Director David Salyers is far left on front row and Dan Eagar, Water Pollution Control, Natural Resources section manager, is far right on front row. Staff are standing in front of an airboat, used to navigate the delta waters of West Tennessee.



Welcome New Employees



Back Row:(left to right) Josh Howard, Roan Mountain State Park; Ron Elder, Chickasaw State Park; Wes Huckaba, David Crockett State Park; John Bass, Montgomery Bell State Park. Front Row:(left to right) Brooke Saad, Pinson Mounds State Park; Liz Holliday, Montgomery Bell State Park; Jammie Mize, Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park; not pictured, Todd Miller, ranger, Chickasaw State Park.

State Parks Adds Eight New Rangers

A new group of eight rangers brings skills, smarts and previous work experience in seasonal park positions to posts across the state. "It speaks highly of our parks and current staff that we can attract and hire outstanding people," said Assistant Commissioner Mike Carlton. "We are proud to have these men and women as part of our ranger corps at Tennessee State Parks."



Bear Trace Professionals Join Tennessee Golf Trail

Head golf professionals and course superintendents from four Bear Trace golf courses recently met in Nashville with State Parks Golf Director Jim Webb. The operational responsibility and ownership for these Bear Trace golf courses transferred from a private company to the state on December 1, 2005.

Jim is working with the professional teams at each Bear Trace course as those locations have become part of the Tennessee Golf Trail. "We are excited about adding these Jack Nicklaus signature designed Bear Trace courses to the Tennessee Golf Trail," said Webb. "I have been impressed with the Bear Trace staff and their commitment to providing a championship-level golf experience for our customers. The combination of the Bear Trace and our eight traditional State Parks courses puts the Tennessee Golf Trail on track to become the premier golf destination in the state."

For more information on the recently expanded Tennessee Golf Trail, visit www.tngolftail.net.



Back Row (left-right) Neil Cathey, Chickasaw Course Superintendent; Rob Hessing, Chickasaw Head Golf Professional; Chad Garrett, Tims Ford Course Superintendent; Matt Daniels, Tims Ford Head Golf Professional; Robin Boyer, Harrison Bay Head Golf Professional; Tim Brock, Cumberland Mountain Course Superintendent; Jim Webb, State Parks Golf Director. Front Row (left-right) Paul Carter, Harrison Bay Course Superintendent; Kathy Glapa, State Parks Central Office; Kelvin Burgin, Cumberland Mountain Head Golf Professional.

"Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it"

- Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

Cumberland Caverns Bigger and Better

A second edition of Larry Matthews' book, *Cumberland Caverns*, was published in October. The first edition was published by the National Speleological Society in 1989. The book has been updated, new photographs have been added and it has been re-formatted into an 8.5 x 11 inch size.

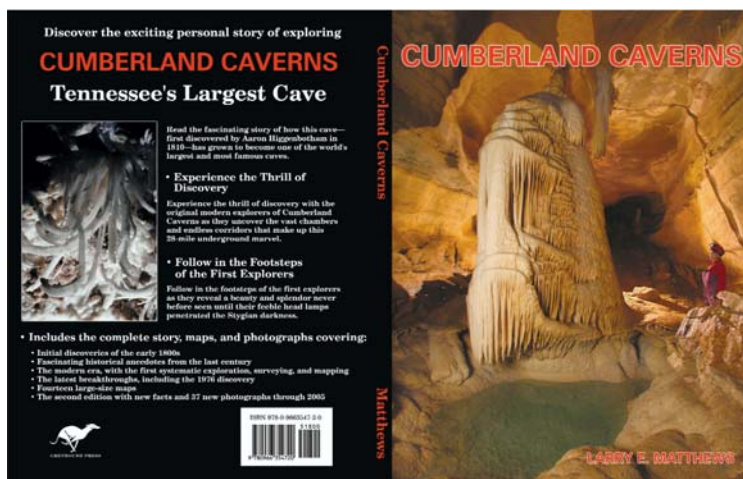
Cumberland Caverns is one of the largest known caves in the world, with a mapped length of nearly 28 miles. The main entrance was discovered by Aaron Higgenbotham while he was surveying the nearby Chickamauga Trail in 1810. Higgenbotham Cave, as it was called, was explored off and on by the local residents for the remainder of the 1800s and was a very popular spot for social outings. Many old names and dates are found in the cave from this time period.

Another nearby cave, named Henshaw Cave, was mined for saltpeter during perhaps both the War of 1812 and the Civil War. We do not know the exact dates, because no records were kept, but the saltpeter leaching vats are still present in the cave today. Avid cave explorers from David Lipscomb College found a connection between Henshaw Cave and Higgenbotham Cave in 1953. Among these explorers was former Assistant Commissioner of Environment and Conservation Ken Bunting.

Exploration by these same explorers in the 1950s greatly increased the known extent of the cave, and it soon became obvious that Higgenbotham Cave was the largest known cave in Tennessee. The cave was developed into a commercial cave in 1956 and opened to the public under the name Cumberland Caverns. Even after transition to a commercial cave, several large new sections of cave have been discovered during the last 50 years.

This new edition is available at the cave's gift shop and it is available at www.caves.org, the Web site for the National Speleological Society under their "Bookstore" section.

When not spelunking, writing about caves or photographing caves, Larry works for the Division of Ground Water Protection in the department's central office.



Cover photo by Tim Curtis. Back cover by Bob Biddix. Copyright Larry Matthews.

WANTED: High Impact Photography for Report on Tennessee's Environment

Employees are invited to submit their photography of Tennessee's natural resources for placement in our Report on Tennessee's Environment. UT Professor Dave Feldman, TDEC's Scholar-in-Residence, is heading up the department's effort to publish this report in 2006.

We're looking for high quality photographs of Tennessee's diverse air, land and water resources from those of you who work so hard to protect, restore and improve them. You can submit one or two of your best in any of the following formats:

slides

high-resolution digital photos (300 dpi or 2,400x3,000 pixels)

8x10-inch color photographic print

Please send your images to Robin Cathcart at L&C Annex, 1st Floor, Nashville, TN 37243 or robin.cathcart@state.tn.us by February 1st. You may also call Robin at (615) 532-0929 with any questions.



Water cascades at Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park in Coffee County.

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Final Figures in for TECC

The department wrapped up the 2005 Tennessee Employees Charitable Campaign (TECC) in December. 625 TDEC employees made a contribution during this year's campaign, and more than \$46,500 was pledged to support local charities through the TECC. Thanks to each and every one who participated in this year's TECC. These results reflect the outstanding generosity that exists across our department.



TECC Donations By the Numbers

Final Results

625 TDEC employees made pledges
\$46,551.40 was pledged

TDEC raised **100.3%** of last year's total giving (\$46,419 raised in 2004)

TDEC raised **93%** of this year's total dollar goal (\$50,000)

625 out of **2,427** TDEC employees participated (26%)

People, Projects and Priorities

Call for Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2006 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards. The awards recognize outstanding achievements by individuals, organizations, educational institutions and businesses for successful environmental projects and conservation measures.

The 2006 program will select one Governor's Award winner in each of the following categories:

Agriculture/Forestry
Aquatic Resource Preservation
Building Green
Energy Leadership
Environmental Education and Outreach
Green Schools
Greenways and Trails
Hazardous Waste
Lifetime Achievement
Natural Heritage Conservation
Parks and Recreation
Pollution Prevention

If you know of any individuals, organizations, educational institutions or businesses that may be candidates for these awards please take a few minutes to submit a nomination on their behalf before the deadline of March 31, 2006. For more information about submitting a nomination, including eligibility rules, past recipients, and nomination forms, please visit www.tdec.net/awards or send an email to tesa.awards@state.tn.us.



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Phil Bredezen, Governor
Jim Fyke, Commissioner

Paul Sloan, Deputy Commissioner
Larry Lance, Assistant Commissioner, Finance and Business Services
Mike Carlton, Assistant Commissioner, Parks and Conservation/Operations
Andy Lyon, Assistant Commissioner, Parks Hospitality Services and Special Events
David Owenby, Director, Public Affairs
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